



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: SEPTEMBER 30, 2002

## **New Safety Program Helps Protect California Consumers From Dangerous Pharmacy Mistakes**

### **CONTACTS:**

*Board of Pharmacy Recognized for First in Nation Program*

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**SACRAMENTO** - California pharmacies are the first in the nation to get a new safety program designed to prevent prescription errors. The California State Board of Pharmacy is receiving some rare recognition for instituting the process.

A national award has just been given to The California State Board of Pharmacy for its "Quality Assurance Program" by the Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation (C.L.E.A.R). It recognizes a program or agency that goes well beyond the usual government operation. The award has been given to California state agencies only a few times in the past dozen years.

"The C.L.E.A.R. Award is well deserved recognition for the Pharmacy Board and California," said California Department of Consumer Affairs Director Kathleen Hamilton. "The Golden State once again leads the way in creating innovative safety programs for consumers."

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The Board of Pharmacy's "Quality Assurance Review" requires all California pharmacies to set up a procedure to investigate and eliminate prescription errors. The program which began in January 2002, requires pharmacies to:

- Identify and document the error;
- Review all details within 72 hours;
- Notify patient and prescriber of errors; and
- Use the information collected to prevent the error from happening again.

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Other States are following California's lead by putting similar programs into place

"Pharmacists are by professional nature very detail oriented and serious about their work," said Board President John Jones. "The quality assurance review gives them an important process to improve patient care."

The California State Board of Pharmacy, which is part of the Department of Consumer Affairs, licenses more than 35,000 pharmacists and pharmacies. Consumers can get information about pharmacies, how to take prescription drugs wisely or how to file complaints by visiting the Board's Web Site at [www.pharmacy.ca.gov](http://www.pharmacy.ca.gov), or by calling (916) 445-5014.

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